

**REFUGE OF LIES**  
by Ron Reed

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REFUGE OF LIES was first produced by Theatre & Company on February 25, 1994 at the Water Street Theatre, Kitchener, Ontario. It was directed by Stuart Squadron-Wattles, with the following cast:

Rudi Vanderwaal . . . . . Ted Follows  
Netty Vanderwaal . . . . . Doris O'Dell  
Conrad de Groening / Pieter Vanderwaal . Alan K. Sapp  
Hanni de Groening . . . . . Linda G. Bush  
Anna Cummings . . . . . Helen J. Butlin  
Jake Neufeld / Dominee . . . . . Chuck Pereen  
Man / Simon Katzman . . . . . Brian Otto

Set and costume design were by Dennis Horn; lighting design was by Stuart Scadron-Wattles; sound design was by Alan K. Sapp; stage management was by Kathleen Sheehy; and the literary manager was Wes Wikkerink.

The playwright would like to acknowledge his appreciation for the dramaturgical assistance of Stuart Scadron-Wattles, Wes Wikkerink and John Lazarus, for the encouragement provided by the New Play Centre in Vancouver whose 24 Hour Playwriting Competition was the occasion of the first draft of this play (under the title "Flesh And Blood"), and the Creative Gift Foundation whose generous grant subsidized the play's subsequent development.

REFUGE OF LIES

Character List  
(4 Men and 3 Women)

RUDI VANDERWAAL  
Immigrant from Holland and Paraguay, 73 years old

NETTY VANDERWAAL  
Rudi's wife

CONRAD DE GROENING / PIETER VANDERWAAL  
Rudi's friend / Rudi's father

HANNI DE GROENING  
Conrad's wife

ANNA CUMMINGS  
Simon's niece

JAKE NEUFELD / DOMINEE  
Rudi's Mennonite pastor / Rudi's pastor in Paraguay

MAN / SIMON KATZMAN  
Orthodox rabbi / Journalist from Holland

(For reasons of economy, the roles of HANNI and ANNA can be played by the same actress. But unlike the other doublings, there is no dramaturgical reason for this, and casting the two roles separately is probably preferable.)

## REFUGE OF LIES

### Design

The play takes place primarily in the Vanderwaal's home (bathroom, bedroom, front room and pigeon coops) and the church (office and chapel). Other locations need only be suggested.

The set should not be naturalistic. The central design images of the play are a bathtub, a number of doors, and some sort of pigeon coop (without pigeons). The doors are each used to represent a variety of different doors during the course of the play.

The bathtub must be functional. Thus, the sound of running water is a live sound, and it would be best if other sound effects (door knocking, pigeons) could also be produced live. The pigeon sounds might be accomplished with bird whistles, off-stage actor voices, perhaps supplemented with taped sound.

### Disclaimer

While this play obviously finds its inspiration in certain historical events and persons, the playwright in no way intends the script to be taken as factual in any way. No comment is being made on any particular person or event.

"Hail will sweep away your refuge, the lie,  
and water will overflow your hiding place.  
Your covenant with death will be annulled;  
your agreement with the grave will not stand."

ACT I

(A narrow circle of light comes up on a man who stands looking out at the audience. He is dressed as an orthodox Jew, mostly in black, a full beard. He holds something in his arms, wrapped in a shawl. He looks at us as if maybe he recognizes us, but isn't quite sure, can't quite remember. After a moment, we hear the sound of running water, a river, and the beginning of the following scene. Dim light, dappled through leaves, comes up on a young RUDI and NETTY. The light on the MAN stays up throughout the scene: he continues watching us.)

RUDI. Janette.

NETTY. Werner.

RUDI. Janette. Can we... Can you stay behind? I must talk with someone. With you. Do you think we could...

NETTY. (Calling out to some friends:) Back at the church! We'll catch you up at the picnic, ja? (She turns back to RUDI, smiling: she is very much in love.) And so, Werner Epp, what is it that is so terrible important you have to take me away from all of my friends?

RUDI. (Uncomfortable, looks around at others who are still close by) Maybe back down by the river, we could...

NETTY. Ah, now, what is it you are up to then, young man? Can I trust you? Or would I be wiser to go back with-- (NETTY sees the seriousness on RUDI's face, stops herself. Perhaps she touches his face.) Yes. If you like.

(They walk, then sit.)

RUDI. Janette... There are so many things.

NETTY. (She takes his hand.) Then maybe you should start with the first.

RUDI. Janette, I... Janette, do you think you could... That is to say, I have been thinking of... (A deep breath.) I have spoken to the Dominee. To your father. And he says it would be good, it would be he thinks the best thing... (Beat) I want to be baptized, Janette, and next Sunday is Easter, and...

NETTY. Oh, Werner! (She throws her arms around him.) Oh, Werner! For this I have prayed, so many times. (Getting up quickly) We must tell--

RUDI. No, Janette, please. That is not all.

NETTY. (Sitting) But that is so beautiful! Papa must be so happy. He likes you very much.

RUDI. (Smiling) He is pleased.

(RUDI looks off across the river.)

NETTY. You said there was something else?

RUDI. Well... There is a thing I must say to you, that I must tell you. A thing always I have kept hidden, but if I am to be a Christian, if I am to be

baptized, I cannot keep it any longer inside, cannot keep it hidden...

NETTY. You do not have to tell me, Werner. Perhaps it should be between you and God.

RUDI. Janette. Before I came here, when I was a boy, I grew up in Holland.

NETTY. Well, that is not so serious! I'm sure God can forgive that.

RUDI. And... Netty, I love you.

(NETTY is completely taken aback. RUDI reaches inside his pockets, brings out the Dutch boy and Dutch girl statues, gives them to NETTY.)

NETTY. Werner. These are sweet. I... What... Where did you get them.

(RUDI takes her hand, takes one of the statues, turns it bottom up.)

NETTY. Werner! You carved these?

RUDI. (He nods.) For you.

NETTY. They are so beautiful. I... They must have taken a very long time.

RUDI. But you need to know something. The names I have carved in the bottom...

NETTY. Our names. (She smiles, perhaps self-conscious, awkward, embarrassed.)

RUDI. Only... Back in Holland, I... How do I say this, so long I have hidden it away... Because of what I did in that country, because of the war, I-

(NETTY leans over, puts a gentle finger across his lips. Shakes her head.)

NETTY. You have told the Lord of these things?

(RUDI nods.)

NETTY. And they cause you pain? Sorrow?

(RUDI nods.)

NETTY. Then they are gone. Now that you live for God, these things you do not have to go around hiding anymore. They are hidden in Jesus.

(NETTY takes her finger away from his lips. Looks at the two carvings.)

NETTY. Thank you, Werner.

RUDI. Rudi.

NETTY. Rudi.

(She shrugs, kisses him lightly, then jumps up and runs off. Their light fades out, leaving the MAN standing alone, looking out at us. Now we hear the snapping of cards, the occasional exclamation: "One hand only, use one hand!"

"Oh for a yellow eight, someone here is sitting on a yellow eight," "Cards under the table is what he has, a whole extra deck I say. Cards under the table," etc. As the lights fade on THE MAN they come up on a table where a round of Dutch Blitz is coming to a climax: RUDI and NETTY VANDERWAAL, CONRAD and HANNI DE GROENING. RUDI calls out "Blitz!" and the round is at an end. They begin counting piles of cards as they speak.)

CONRAD. Always the luck is with you, Rudi!

NETTY. Lucky, he was born lucky was my Rudi.

RUDI. Come now, luck is it? What do the gospels have to say about luck?

HANNI. It's his quickness, that's what it is.

CONRAD. Nothing.

NETTY. It's one of his jokes.

CONRAD. You can't tell us the gospels speak about luck, Rudi. Where does our Lord come in when you speak of luck?

RUDI. Where exactly! Nowhere. So how is it I win by luck?

CONRAD. Ah, so it's Providence then is it?

HANNI. (Keeping score:) Netty?

NETTY. Twelve, with five to the bad, for--

HANNI. Seven. I make mine fourteen...

CONRAD. And Providence dealt me five to the good, seven to the bad...

RUDI. And you'd blame this on our Lord, Mister de Groening? More than a touch of the Calvinist in you--

HANNI. Rudi?

RUDI. I hate to be the one to tell you the bad news, but... I think twenty-seven will just about do...

CONRAD. Pack them up!

RUDI. My punishment, I get the coffee.

HANNI. It's his quickness, he doesn't even think so much...

NETTY. (To RUDI:) There's koek on the sideboard, we'll just tidy this away...

RUDI. (With a look to CONRAD, before disappearing into the kitchen:) Well we are in luck then, aren't we Mister De Groening?

CONRAD. (Shaking his head, to NETTY:) This husband of yours, and his jokes.

NETTY. I think this is how I knew that it was him I should marry.

HANNI. His joking?

NETTY. Not so much his joking. My laughing. My father, he was the Dominee at the church you know, he said to me the one time, he said, that Werner and his jokes--

HANNI. Werner?

NETTY. Some people called him Werner, he used to be Werner. Always you are laughing at them, these jokes of his, that's what my father would say. It must be that you are in love with this man, Janette. No one else is laughing.

(RUDI returns with a glass of water, sits at the table.)

RUDI. And this is how it was I knew I had chosen the right one. She laughed, she kept on laughing. Five, ten years she still would laugh.

NETTY. (Seeing that he hasn't brought the dessert:) Rudi...

RUDI. Not so much today, but still I make her smile, no?

NETTY. Rudi. The coffee?

RUDI. Just water for me. My stomach you know, I can't sleep anymore.

NETTY. Perhaps our guests... {would like something.}

HANNI. Ach, we are thick enough.

RUDI. Yes indeed, Netty, perhaps there's something sweet for our guests. Do you mind Netty, I was just up, maybe a piece of that boter koek we had, for Conrad here?

(An uncomfortable pause.)

RUDI. I'm sorry, did I?....

HANNI. I'll give you a hand in there, Netty.

NETTY. (Rising) No, no, you just sit.

HANNI. (Rising) Ach. One it's work, two it's company.

(They are off to the kitchen.)

RUDI. Conrad? I said something?...

CONRAD. The dessert. They thought you were going to--

RUDI. How rude of me. I didn't hear, must be my hearing is going. (Rising, to the women in the kitchen:) I didn't mean to play the lazy man, let me give a hand...

(The women return with the coffee and a plate of pastries.)

RUDI. I was in the kitchen when you mentioned this, I am sorry...

HANNI. It's okay, Rudi. Happens to all of us. At this age, you know.

RUDI. Sugar and cream, Conrad likes his sweet... (He goes to the kitchen, NETTY follows, speaks to him in a low tone. They return.) Oh, what a goose! And an old goose at that.

CONRAD. An old goose who cheats at cards!

RUDI. Just Wednesday, not even that, it was yesterday, afternoon, I said to myself, Vanderwaal, you're getting to be old. You remember, Netty.

NETTY. We were driving.

RUDI. And I stop at the light, on Fraser there, at forty first, across from the school it was, kitty corner from the cemetery, and I pull up at the light--

NETTY. He was driving--

RUDI. And I see a man at the bus stop, across the road there. Made me sit up and pay attention, you know what I mean? Looking right at me, as though he recognized me, about to say my name if only he could remember.

NETTY. And of course he was across the street, the intersection.

RUDI. A Jew he was.

HANNI. You could tell?

CONRAD. You can tell.

RUDI. Oh, anyone would know. The big full beard, one of those hats--

NETTY. A homburg.

RUDI. The black ones, he was all in black.

NETTY. That's a homburg hat, they call that. Isn't that a homburg, with the curled up brim all around? That's what we called them, a homburg hat.

CONRAD. Did he have the curls? Down the side. You see those people all the time now...

RUDI. He's holding something in his arms, groceries maybe, or was it in a shawl?...

NETTY. I didn't see, you saw.

RUDI. Wrapped. A baby maybe--

CONRAD. A maybe baby--

RUDI. Anyhow, he's looking at me, surprised to see it's me in the car or something, starts to lift this bundle like he's showing it to me - to me! - like he wants me to take it, and I'm about to say to Netty, "Look..." Only the light, it changes, the car behind honks its horn - they're all in such a hurry nowadays - I put it into gear, and when I look up...

NETTY. No one there.

RUDI. Oh yes, liefijen. Someone there. One of these, what do you say, punk rock kids they have now? Head shaved, the big black boots, all black clothes...

HANNI. They scare me, these kids. One time I was waiting at the bus outside Army and Navy--

NETTY. It was the black clothes, that's what made him look like the Jew, a Rabbi maybe?

RUDI. Just this young man, all alone there! No sign of the Jew.

CONRAD. He stepped away.

RUDI. Never was there, Conrad de Groening, never was there! Nobody else around but this boy, this young man.

(CONRAD shakes his head slowly. Crossfade to SIMON begins.)

HANNI. One of these optical illusions.

RUDI. Looking right at me.

CONRAD. And the, what, the bundle he was holding? It was what.

RUDI. Nothing. No bundle, no nothing.

(CONRAD shakes his head slowly.)

RUDI. (Taking off glasses, to clean them.) Maybe it's this prescription. But whatever it is, I said to myself, Vanderwaal, you're getting old. Isn't that what I said, Janette?

(Finish crossfade to SIMON, who stands in the same posture as the MAN at the opening of the play, looking out at the audience. During the following speech, RUDI and NETTY get into bed.)

SIMON. They misunderstand. Many people, they don't understand. To them it seems to be about vengeance, and that is distasteful to them. As though it were a matter of taste.

But this is not about revenge, it is about justice. It is about bringing to justice criminals, murderers. Criminals whose crimes are so immense, so ghastly...

There is a principle in the law, let the punishment suit the crime. Indeed. But there are crimes so horrific, so inhuman, what punishment can suit? I will tell you a story, an incident.

It was soon after the war, only a few weeks after the Liberation. Two young women, girls really, except for what they had lived, two Jewish girls were making their way back to their homes, I believe this was the Ukraine. No food, nothing but their freedom.

And there in the woods, they came upon a scene. A scene they could hardly tell of later, because of what it was happened inside them that night.

German families, in flight. On the move now because night was coming. Fleeing, only they had nowhere to flee to. A couple of men who had been soldiers, or camp guards, and their families. German mothers, hating their

babies for crying in the night like so many Jewish mothers before them had hated their Jewish babies, in hiding, for fear of the German soldiers. Keeping their babies from crying, only that is something you cannot do. Babies cry.

Soldiers from the Russian army were near, and they heard the crying. And they came to that clearing there. They'd not seen clean, healthy women in many, many months. And they remembered what these German soldiers, or German soldiers just like these, had done to their sisters and lovers, their villages, their land.

Two German men. Many, many Russian soldiers. So the Jewish girls watched as the two German men watched as the many, many men took the wives, mothers, daughters. Had their way with them. Many, many times, in front of their men.

I am sorry. I regret repeating this story even as it comes from my mouth. I am sorry. But how else... Things have happened in this world, things we dare not forget.

The point of my story is this. The thing that happened in the hearts of these two girls, looking on. Horror, you would think? Fear perhaps, hiding there in the trees? But no.

Joy, they felt. Relief. A feeling like when justice comes. How often had they lain awake in the night in the camps, crying out to their God for deliverance. Crying out for justice. Crying out for some sort of amends to be made. And here, before their eyes, amends were being made. No sooner were they free, no sooner did they see their deliverance, than they saw recompense.

I don't defend them, these girls. These Jewish girls. Nor do I condemn them. I did not experience what they did. But can we imagine what crimes had been committed against them that this scene of horror could seem not a crime itself but justice? Even-handed, however horrific.

Let the punishment suit the crime, we say. An eye for an eye. But what fair punishment for those whose crimes are unspeakable? What justice can be brought to bear?

(Fade to black.)

There is a knocking at the door. RUDI sits up in bed, switches on the light by the bed. The knocking continues, RUDI checks the bedside clock: it is very late. The knocking persists, he gets out of bed, pulls on a robe over his night shirt as he goes down stairs. Opens the door. There stands the Jewish MAN on the doorstep, looking at RUDI.

RUDI. Mister...? I am sorry, we know each other, I just can't place the name... Is something wrong? Can I... I am sorry, it is very late. Goodnight.

(RUDI closes the door, locks it. The knocking comes again. Stands there a moment, begins to go upstairs, goes back and opens the door. There is no one there now. The knocking persists, becomes the sound of a spanking, very hard and sudden: no crying, just gasps as the blows are struck, maybe a stifled sob or two after they are done. Isolating spotlight comes up on PIETER VANDERWAAL in a chair. Played by the same actor who plays CONRAD, with only the slightest change to his costume, to allow the audience initially to believe that this is CONRAD. On his lap, a bundle of cloth - perhaps the same wrapped-up shawl that will reappear later in the play - representing at the moment a little boy being disciplined. When the blows come to an end, PIETER sits the "boy" up on his lap, speaks to him:)

CONRAD. Oh, my little one, Papa knows, it's very hard to understand this, but if Papa doesn't spank, bad little boys never will learn to stop doing such bad things.

And you know what happens then? Some dark night, in the middle of the night

when bad things do their work, along comes the Old Jew, with his hairy hands and bad, smelly old Jew beard, and his bad breath that smells like blood. Into your room he comes and snatches up the bad little boy and takes him away, quick as that! Takes him away from his Mama and his Papa forever and ever.

You think that this is not true? You think you are maybe too old for this? Let me talk to you like a man, then.

You think he will not come, the old Jew? Hah! Already he comes, my son! Takes away already the jobs from other boys' Papas, Jan Dreesman's pa already he loses his job. And the Jew he hires all these foreign types to take our jobs, the unions just like in Russia starting up all over, pretty soon the Communists take away even the job from your own Papa!

See, Rudi? Now your Papa speaks to you like a man, not just like a little boy. And maybe if you be very good, show your Papa that you are a man not a boy, that Papa can trust his Rudi, then maybe now that you know this, maybe some night Papa can take you along with the other men when we go out on our visits? Would you like that? That's my Rudi.

(Spotlight out. A pounding at the door. Lights up on the living room as RUDI goes to open the door.)

SIMON. Mr. Vanderwaal?

RUDI. Good day.

SIMON. You work at the University?

RUDI. No. Mister?... (He puts out his hand.)

SIMON. (Not taking Rudi's hand.) Katzman. Simon Katzman.

RUDI. Mr. Katzman. Would you care to... (Gestures inside. SIMON makes no move to come in.)

SIMON. Rudiger Vanderwaal?

RUDI. Usually it's Rudi.

SIMON. Or Werner. Werner Epp, I believe.

RUDI. What do you want of me?

SIMON. I was given to understand that you are an instructor at the University.

RUDI. Was, yes. I am retired now.

SIMON. You were born in Holland?

RUDI. Yes.

SIMON. Your father was Pieter Vanderwaal?

RUDI. Yes.

SIMON. Are you, then, the same Rudiger Vanderwaal who emigrated to this country in 1960?

RUDI. Is there something wrong? You are with the government then?

SIMON. The same Rudiger Vanderwaal who collaborated with the German Occupation Forces between 1942 and 1945?

(Pause.)

RUDI. Some would say.

SIMON. Either you are or you are not, Mr. Vanderwaal.

(No reply.)

SIMON. The same Rudiger Vanderwaal who hunted down his Jewish countrymen and sent them to the death camps?

(RUDI closes the door. SIMON pounds on it again, RUDI does not move. After a moment, NETTY comes in to answer, is surprised to see her husband standing there.)

NETTY. Rudi? (Beat) Rudi, what is going on? Are you alright?

RUDI. It is nothing. Go back to the kitchen.

NETTY. There's someone at the door, liepchen. (Beginning to go past him to the door.)

RUDI. It is no one. I said, go back to the kitchen.

(She looks at him a moment, is about to speak.)

RUDI. Go.

(She goes. The knocking continues, both doors. RUDI crosses to the other door, opens it, JAKE NEUFELD is there, keys in hand, about to unlock the door from the outside - briefcase, overcoat, hat, those boots you zip over your indoor shoes. Stomps off the snow, begins taking his winter clothing off as he speaks.)

JAKE. Late, late, late. Always late. It was locked, I didn't want to bother... Rudi. You... [How did you get in here?]

RUDI. I came in through the sanctuary. No one answered when I--

JAKE. Elsie, it's her week off, we leave it locked, the church office. These drivers, no idea how to drive in winter. Such a bang-up I saw...

RUDI. I walked. It was a nice day for a walk.

JAKE. But the sanctuary was open, you say? So half the doors we lock, half we leave open. No matter. Half the people are honest, isn't that so Rudi?

(JAKE is unlocking his office door.)

RUDI. Perhaps I thought we might speak in the sanctuary.

JAKE. Oh. Well, yes. Only, in here, I can keep one eye on the phones. It's Elsie's week away...

RUDI. Perhaps the sanctuary, Jake. (Beat) It will be only a short while. Then the phones.

JAKE. As you say.

(The light changes as they enter the chapel - warmer, softer, perhaps coming in through stained glass windows. Directly, RUDI sits in a pew, his head down - perhaps he is deeply weary, perhaps he prays. After a moment he sits up straight, looks at his friend.)

RUDI. The body and blood. Jake, I need you to...

JAKE. Rudi?

RUDI. Can you give me the Lord's Supper, Jake?

JAKE. What, you mean, right now? Rudi, I...

RUDI. Please, Jake.

(Pause.)

JAKE. What is it, my friend. What is wrong?

RUDI. Nothing. I...

JAKE. Rudi! Don't tell me there is nothing wrong. You come in, I can see with my own eyes you are upset, then you want the Communion, it is a Wednesday afternoon and you want...

RUDI. I am sorry. (Beat) They will be speaking to you soon, I am sure. Or you will read it in the paper, and I want you should hear it from me. It is only right, you have been my friend this long.

JAKE. Not such a terrible burden, Rudi.

RUDI. I am sick that it must come out in this way, that I had never the courage to tell you before. So I tell you now.

(JAKE puts his hand on RUDI's shoulder, RUDI cannot keep looking at his friend.)

RUDI. I am afraid he is from the newspapers, or perhaps one of these.... Kaufman, Simon I think it was, Kaufman. You know that name?

JAKE. No.

RUDI. Asked me if I was Rudi Vanderwaal, if I worked at the University, all these questions. Was I born in Holland? Was I... Did I help the Nazis.

JAKE. I see.

RUDI. He knew my father. His name.

JAKE. Did he say what he wanted? Why he wanted to speak with you?

RUDI. He left. He did not say.

(Beat)

JAKE. Did you? Help the Nazis?

RUDI. They didn't need our... I helped my country. I thought. Many young men, many of my friends, my father's friends...

JAKE. Rudi. You did nothing you feel... Fearful of?

(A moment.)

RUDI. I have left these things behind, Jake. In Paraguay, I left them washing away down the river the day the Dominee baptized me. It wasn't I did these things, Jake. That was a different man. Another place, another time, another Rudi Vanderwaal.

JAKE. Who did what things? What are they saying that you did?

RUDI. I do not know. I do not know who "they" are, I do not know why they have searched me out. What do they want from me? What can I do, what can I change?

JAKE. What are their accusations?

RUDI. I DO NOT KNOW! Can't you hear me? How am I supposed to know of what they accuse me when they don't tell me?

(Silence.)

RUDI. Dominee...

(JAKE smiles.)

RUDI. (Correcting himself:) Pastor.

JAKE. (Correcting RUDI:) Jake.

RUDI. Alright - Jake. I am sorry. It is I who cannot hear you.

JAKE. You are frightened, my friend.

(RUDI nods. JAKE puts his hand on his friend's shoulder, RUDI puts his own hand over JAKE's. Knocking begins at another door and lights begin to crossfade as JAKE gets up, gets bread and wine, which he administers to RUDI in half-light as the other scene progresses. Crossfade to SIMON's hotel room. There is a knocking. SIMON sets aside a file folder he has been examining, rises from where he sits and opens the door. It is ANNA, with a couple of suitcases.)

SIMON. Annaliese!

ANNA. Uncle Simon!

(They embrace.)

SIMON. How good to see you, girl!

ANNA. I tried to get an earlier flight in. But there's gobs of snow in Toronto, everything's delayed. I was going to be here in time to meet you at the airport.

SIMON. Look at you! If you aren't the very picture of your mother, when she was... How old are you now, Annaliese?

ANNA. Twenty three now, Uncle.

SIMON. I don't believe you.

ANNA. Believe it.

SIMON. No, that cannot be. With me only just turned thirty-four--

(ANNA responds.)

SIMON. That would make your mother...

ANNA. Twenty-nine.

SIMON. Twenty-nine. Much better.

ANNA. By your counting.

SIMON. So you, Annaliese, are not twenty-three at all...

ANNA. Two years old, uncle.

SIMON. Finally we get the truth!

(ANNA has begun to open one of her suitcases, and now takes out a small and precious bundle, which she offers to SIMON.)

SIMON. And this is...

ANNA. Mom sent it with me.

(SIMON opens a beautiful prayer shawl.)

ANNA. She thought it should be yours for a while, now.

SIMON. Mama's prayer shawl.

ANNA. Because of... Because of what you're doing, I guess. She says Oma would have wanted you to have it.

(Silence. ANNA sees the file folder sitting open, a photograph on top. She picks it up, studies it closely.)

ANNA. So this is the guy?

SIMON. There's no doubt.

ANNA. Shoot. So what're you going to do? I mean, the guy must be pushing seventy...

SIMON. He's seventy three.

ANNA. And you're going to, what, turn him over to the police? Have him thrown in jail? Like he's a real menace on the streets or what?

(SIMON says nothing.)

ANNA. Maybe we should leave him alone. I mean, seventy three years old...

SIMON. Your grandmother would have been eighty one this year. If not for men like Mr Vanderwaal.

(Beat)

ANNA. I see what you're saying.

SIMON. Anna, there are nights I wake up, and I shake. I actually shake, so that I cannot get back to sleep. I am terrified when the last of the survivors has died - and that will happen soon - when the last has died, and there is no one left to tell the stories, who will believe it? Who could believe it?

ANNA. So you're going to, what, to call somebody?

SIMON. I have done.

(Another knock cues a swift crossfade to the DE GROENING kitchen. CONRAD appears, goes to the door.)

CONRAD. Hold your horses, I'll be there.

(He peers through a peephole, sees that it is NETTY VANDERWAAL.)

CONRAD. Hanni! It is for you...

(He begins the process of unlocking the deadbolt, removing a chain, finally opens the door. NETTY just stands there, not moving.)

CONRAD. Netty, come on in, I was just...

(NETTY still doesn't move to come in.)

CONRAD. Hanni. Hanni, it's Netty Vanderwaal...

(HANNI bustles into the kitchen, perhaps fussing with some piece of clothing.)

HANNI. Coming, coming. Conrad, you'd think it was--

(HANNI sees NETTY standing in the doorway, looks to CONRAD. He exits, leaving the two women alone together.)

HANNI. Do you want to...

(NETTY covers her face in her hands, still standing outside. HANNI looks

about, hustles NETTY in the door, closes it and locks it, guides NETTY to a seat.)

HANNI. Netty, what is it? What... (Beat) You need some coffee. Don't you move, I've got a pot on, just you stay put.

NETTY. Oh, what's to become of us, Hanni? Can they take him away? That's what the papers say, they can just come and take him.

HANNI. Netty?

NETTY. And all because they print it in the paper, these stories, they say these things and everyone they'll think it's true what they say but it isn't, they never asked Rudi, never talked with us, I know Rudi could explain, he's a good man--

HANNI. What stories? What did they print?

NETTY. Do you think they took him already, maybe? He said he was just going out to the store, just for some cigarettes, that was one thirty, it's nearly five now, where is he Hanni? Can they just take him like that, take him away?

HANNI. Wait, Netty, one thing then the next. What are you saying? Who took him?

(NETTY stops, just stares at her friend, cannot breathe, just looks at her with terror in her eyes. A moment, then HANNI takes her in her arms, pulls NETTY's head to her bosom, pats her on the head like a little child.)

HANNI. Just be still a moment. Be still.

(Sound of water running into the bathtub, crossfade to VANDERWAAL living room as RUDI comes in his front door.)

RUDI. Netty? Netty.

(There is no answer. He goes up the stairs to the closed bathroom door.)

RUDI. Netty, I've been with the pastor. He says to greet you.

(No answer. He goes to the bedroom, flicks the light on, she is not there. Flicks it off, begins to go back out of the room, stops, flicks the light on, crosses to the bed. There is a newspaper, folded open to a particular page. He begins to read, calls out:)

RUDI. Netty! Netty!

(Goes to the bathroom, knocks on the door. No answer. Calls down the stairs:)

RUDI. Netty...

(Suddenly fearful that something has gone wrong, he flings the bathroom door open. The room is empty. He turns off the water, sits on the edge of the bathtub, weeps.)

ACT II

(A narrow circle of light comes up on the Dominee who stands looking out at the audience just as the MAN did at the beginning of the play. He is dressed in a long black clerical robe, old fashioned. He holds a Bible. After a few moments of this, the pigeon sounds fade up, then the lights in the attic. It is late, RUDI cannot sleep. He is working with his pigeons. He takes a large water tray out of the cage and goes to the bathroom, puts it into the bathtub and begins to run water into it. Up come the river sounds, and the light begins to shift to the leaf-dappled light of the river bank in Paraguay. The DOMINEE begins to read from the Bible.)

DOMINEE. (Reading from the Bible:) "Hail will sweep away your refuge, the lie, and water will overflow your hiding place. Your covenant with death will be annulled; your agreement with the grave will not stand."

RUDI. Thank you for coming here. Dominee, I am sorry to wake you, it is so late, but I--

DOMINEE. It is nothing, Rudi. I am your pastor.

RUDI. I could not sleep. As I lay there, always in my mind was the picture of the baptism yesterday, and... And other things. And inside, something pushes me to get out my Bible, and I open it up. And this. (Puts his hand out, DOMINEE gives him his Bible back.)

DOMINEE. And you think this is... This is about your baptism?

RUDI. I cannot hide any longer, Dominee. God is grieved with hiding. And He is telling me, now that I am His, no more lies. no more hiding. I have stopped running from him, now I must stop running from the truth. I must go back to Holland.

DOMINEE. Werner, no.

RUDI. It is no use, Dominee. They will come for me. If not here in Paraguay, then they will hunt me down in my next hiding place. Even in Canada.

DOMINEE. Not your hiding place, Werner. Your home.

RUDI. My home is Holland! That is where I belong.

DOMINEE. No, Werner. Not any longer. You are a new man, living the new life. (Reading from the Baptismal Certificate, which is folded neatly inside Rudi's Bible:) "Certificate Of Baptism. Peace Church, Colonia Mennonita, Paraguay. Easter, 1958." Easter. You die to the old, you start all over again with the new life. "Old things are past away..." And yet you persist in clinging to those old things, Werner! Let them go. Soon you will be a husband, with maybe many children. God calls you to leave the old things behind...

(Pause. RUDI takes the Baptismal Certificate from the Dominee, reads it over. Then takes an eraser, hastily begins erasing something.)

DOMINEE. Werner!

(The DOMINEE reaches to take back the certificate, but RUDI looks at him sharply, perhaps puts out a hand, stops him. RUDI finishes the erasing quickly,

then writes something new on the form. Blows the ink dry, hands it back to the DOMINEE.)

DOMINEE. But Werner...

RUDI. Rudi. It is Rudi now. Rudi Vanderwaal, that is my name. (Beat) You have persuaded me, Dominee. You are right. A new man. A new life. I shall marry Janette, we shall start the new life in Canada. What service is it to God for me to go back to Holland, spend my life in probably a jail cell? Leaving Janette... (Beat) But for this new life, no more the old name. No more Werner Epp... I am Vanderwaal.

(The sound crossfades to pigeons and the water running into the bucket, the dappled light fades out, and we are back in the present. RUDI shakes off the memory, turns off the faucet and takes the drinking tray back to the attic. He resumes puttering, giving the pigeons drinking water and feed, talking to the birds in Dutch, matching the tone of his voice to theirs. NETTY comes in behind him, watches him a while. Eventually he turns, reaching for a tool or bit of feed, sees his wife.)

RUDI. You startled me.

NETTY. I should wear bells.

RUDI. (Silence.) You are very late.

NETTY. Did you eat?

RUDI. Alone.

NETTY. You were very late too. You said it was only cigarettes you needed to buy.

RUDI. And a walk. I said a walk.

NETTY. For four hours you needed to walk?

(RUDI does not reply, but turns back to his pigeons.)

NETTY. Werner.

(RUDI shows no reaction.)

NETTY. So who am I, then? Netty Vanderwaal? Or is it Netty Epp after all? Who have I married?

RUDI. What are you saying? I have told you all about this.

NETTY. All?

RUDI. All you asked. All you wanted to know. It was between the Lord and I, you said. What's past is passed, hidden away you said, no need for you to hear it all. Now this change?

NETTY. That man, the other day. At the door. He was this man from Holland, that they show in the paper?

(RUDI nods.)

NETTY. Who are you? That they hunt you down, that such a man would come all the way from Amsterdam? What is it you have done?

(Silence. RUDI stands, holds out his arms toward his wife. She stands still for a time, then steps toward him, lets him hold her.)

NETTY. I am so afraid, Rudi.

RUDI. I am afraid too.

(Crossfade to JAKE's office.)

CONRAD. We are troubled. This is all my wife is saying.

(HANNI nods.)

JAKE. Conrad. Listen to me. I did not say that he is a bad man. I only said--

CONRAD. Then what are you saying, Pastor?

HANNI. We are one hundred percent behind Rudi. Conrad and me.

JAKE. And so am I.

CONRAD. Then show it. Don't hide away about this. Maybe your phone it hasn't been ringing off the hook about poor Vanderwaal, but you should be over at our place these past few days. Pankratzes, Schmidts...

HANNI. Reimers. Even Elfrieda Reimer, she called up.

CONRAD. And Bela, she's terrible upset over this.

HANNI. She don't know what to think.

CONRAD. Sheep without a shepherd is what they are, Jake Neufeld. Without a shepherd.

JAKE. Conrad. Hanni. There will be a time to respond to this as a body, as a fellowship of believers. But I think it's Rudi himself has to take the first step there...

CONRAD. No. No. I couldn't disagree more strong. One of your sheep is lost out there, he broke his leg and the dark is coming, you're saying he's got to find his own way back to the barn?

JAKE. That's not what I'm saying--

CONRAD. That is too what you're saying. There's no two ways about this, who's not for Rudi is against him. And as far as Hanni and me is concerned, we are for him.

HANNI. He's one of ours, Jake.

CONRAD. One of our people. And we better stick together, and that's all

there is to say about that. And you, pastor, you better get your two cents worth in before this congregation is split right down the middle. First it's the papers, the TV, they're calling him a war criminal, they can print anything they like, doesn't matter if any of this ever happened or not, if they say it's so, it's so. Guilty until proven innocent!

JAKE. If Rudi is innocent, it will--

CONRAD. If! If! "If" Rudi is innocent?

JAKE. If he's innocent--

CONRAD. You sound just like them!

JAKE. -- it will be proven in the trial.

CONRAD. (Pause) A trial. One of your congregation is going to be put on trial, and you sit back and wait, you say nothing until the courts make up their minds--

JAKE. It's not the courts I'm waiting--

HANNI. The human courts!

CONRAD. Until the human courts decide what to do with this poor man.

HANNI. Man's law.

CONRAD. For us, it is enough that God's court has said not guilty. Man's court we do not need. Not for this.

JAKE. (Pause) Alright, Conrad. I am sorry, I have been too cautious. As usual. You have spoken the truth, and I thank you for being the thorn in my side. (Takes CONRAD's hand.) I will speak with Rudi again.

(Sudden blackout. A loud knocking, five times. Faint light up on the MAN, who stands as he did at the beginning of the play, but we realize this time he is standing at the foot of the VANDERWAAL's bed. Seven more loud knocks. RUDI begins to rouse from sleep, still groggy, sees the MAN at the foot of his bed, who continues simply to stand and look at him. RUDI sits bolt upright.)

RUDI. What do you want? (No response.) What are you doing-- How did you get into my house? (No response.) I will call the police. Believe me, I will call them. You are not welcome here.

(The MAN turns, leaves. There is pounding at the front door. Finally RUDI leaps out of bed, runs down the stairs, throws open the front door.)

SKINHEAD. (Offstage:) Jew killer!

(Rudi slams the door, holds it shut, then slumps slowly to the floor, back against the door. Blackout. The voices of the next scene begin in the darkness, lights come slowly up once RUDI is in the pastor's office.)

JAKE. I don't know, Rudi. You tell me. (Beat) If you have nothing to hide, then what is to keep you from speaking to the press, telling your side of the story.

(RUDI laughs without humour.)

JAKE. How are they to see any difference from Klaus Barbi, from this Rauca they found, how do they know any difference unless you go to them, tell them.

RUDI. Go to the media? You've read what they write. Everything I would say, they would twist it.

JAKE. Tell them you have changed. Don't hide it that you did what you did, then you just seem like all the others. Bring it into the light! Tell them what you did, but tell them too the rest of the story.

RUDI. And this will make them go away? Because I am a Sunday school teacher now, they will leave me be, me and my Netty?

JAKE. It's not just that, Rudi--

RUDI. These people won't rest until they come to take me away. If I tell them what I did and what I did not do, tell them I am different now, a different man, what part do you think they will hear? They don't know God--

JAKE. You don't know that.

RUDI. --and all they will hear is headlines: "Vanderwaal admits to being Nazi!" They will have my confession, and that is all they are wanting. They only want to destroy me. They know nothing of forgiveness.

JAKE. (Pause.) Rudi, I am concerned about you.

RUDI. Concerned.

JAKE. For this situation, I feel sorry. Sorry for you. But how you are handling it, I don't know. I hate to have to say this, but... All you do is hide. Hide away in your house, ask me to get rid of the press, so you can hide behind your pastor. You hide your past, even from your wife all these years...

RUDI. She didn't want to know. That was all forgiven, the Dominee he said don't carry these things around with you, start the new life. The new life in Christ.

JAKE. Fine, Rudi, fine. But what I don't see, I see you running from these things, but I don't see you taking responsibility. Whatever these things were that you did, did you sorrow over them? Did you leave them behind because you despised them, or did you leave them behind because they were troublesome?

RUDI. Is that not between me and God?

JAKE. Is it? If your soul is sick, is it not for me to bring--

RUDI. So my soul is sick!

JAKE. I did not say your--

RUDI. So now you tell me God cannot forgive my--

JAKE. Of course he can! But I must know if you repent of--

RUDI. You're just like all the rest! All the rest of them!

JAKE. "Without repentance, there is--"

RUDI. I thought you were my friend.

JAKE. That isn't fair.

RUDI. I thought you--

JAKE. Rudi! (Beat) This is not about me being your friend. It is about... It is about me being your pastor.

RUDI. You say I am not God's child.

JAKE. I said no such--

RUDI. You say I did not repent. "Without repentance, there is no forgiveness of sin." It is the same thing as to not be saved.

JAKE. Rudi, I have not said you are unrepentant. I have certainly not said you are unsaved. I have only asked you questions.

RUDI. Questions! You question my repenting. It is the same thing, to question me, to say I lie.

JAKE. Fine, Rudi. Fine. What do you want me to do? You tell me what to do, I will do it. You tell me what to think, I will think it. No need for me to think for myself, Rudi Vanderwaal will tell me what to think!

(Silence. RUDI gets up, goes out the door. JAKE puts his face in his hands. The lights do not go down on him as they come up on NETTY's table. After a while, he turns in his chair, takes out a phone book, dials a number...)

NETTY. He is all alone, this is what I am afraid of. He makes himself alone.

HANNI. And the pastor does not help him.

NETTY. Oh, the pastor, the pastor. He talks theology. My Rudi, he is having his name in the papers, war criminal first class, even last night he is having punks pounding the door down!

HANNI. Oh!

JAKE. You have a contact number for a Mr Simon Kaufman?

NETTY. The middle of the night, so he can't even sleep anymore!

JAKE. Yes, Katzman, that could be it.

NETTY. I wake up, there's no Rudi beside me.

JAKE. Wonderful. Could you put him on, please?

NETTY. I check the clock, it's almost four. I go to the pigeons, he's there a lot lately but not this time. I go down, he's in the dark sitting against the front door, wide awake, all alone in the dark there I don't know how long. Oh, Hanni, he breaks my heart, to see this.

JAKE. Mister Katzman. My name is Jake Neufeld.

NETTY. Where do they get our address?

JAKE. A friend to Rudi Vanderwaal.

NETTY. And what do they do next time they come?

JAKE. His pastor, in fact.

NETTY. And the neighbours? This wakes them too is what I'm thinking.

JAKE. Yes I read your article.

NETTY. Or they read in the papers. And what do they say now about my poor Rudi?

HANNI. My poor Netty.

JAKE. Well, I'll just say for now, you haven't met Rudi Vanderwaal. (Beat) But you do not know him. (Beat) As a matter of fact, that's the purpose of my call. I'd very much like to have you meet. (Lights fade on JAKE.)

NETTY. Your Conrad, you have him speak to Rudi. He is so alone, makes himself all alone. It changes him, Hanni, changes him so I don't know if this is the Rudi I married!

HANNI. Oh, Netty, Netty.

NETTY. What he needs now, my Rudi, he needs someone.

HANNI. He has you.

(NETTY cannot speak. She shrugs. Crossfade to church office.)

SIMON. No, Mister Neufeld, it will not do! Forgive, forgive, forgive and forget. You would take the noble Christian work of forgiveness--

JAKE. Forgiveness is not a work, it is a grace. A gift.

SIMON. Well, don't hand it out too freely, pastor.

JAKE. What then, would you give it only to those who are good enough to receive it? Who don't need it?

SIMON. We all of us need it.

JAKE. Then I do not understand you.

SIMON. Do not make of this holy thing something cheap and common, something without meaning. A greeting card religion, you will have. Poor you, you feel

bad? Did something nasty? Made a mistake? Well let's just pretend like it never happened then, how's that? Feel better?

JAKE. I never would say that!

SIMON. I am glad! Then do not say so to Mister Vanderwaal! This man has done terrible things. Now, he may deny this fact--

JAKE. He does not.

SIMON. Well good. That is something.

JAKE. Indeed. I only wish he would go further....

SIMON. (Pause) Go on.

JAKE. No. It is not for me to say more. I say perhaps too much already.

SIMON. (Beat) You wish that he would go farther. Perhaps we are not so far apart as I had thought, Jake Neufeld. I say only this: Rudi Vanderwaal has done atrocious things, and whatever he has worked out with his God, he must still-- what do you say, "make his penance," only you are Protestant...

JAKE. We do not believe in penance.

SIMON. Apparently not.

JAKE. (JAKE stiffens, then takes a moment to gather his thoughts, choose his words before going on.) Mister Katzman, I have greatly appreciated your willingness to come here, to meet with me. Even I appreciate that you are frank with me.

SIMON. (Smiling) I am being frank? My wife calls it being abrasive.

JAKE. (Smiling, briefly.) I am very tired. Weary of all this. I cannot think clearly about these things, and while I ought to be able to answer better for my faith, I find I cannot. You see, all of this has come on me and my little congregation very suddenly, and I find myself... Confused, really. I know Rudi Vanderwaal, have done for fifteen years, and before my time he was here fifteen more. I thought myself a reasonable judge of character, and he has always seemed to me, and to all of us, a fine man. Not just acceptably polite, not just friendly with his family and friends, but... Good. Oh, human, yes of course, but... There is a kindness about this man. A love. You should see him with his pigeons--

SIMON. Pigeons?

JAKE. He keeps pigeons, adores them. Or with the children. For some of the neighbourhood children from the poorer families we have an after-school program - bible stories, singing, hot meals. He serves in that ministry, and I have chosen that word carefully. He is a servant to those children. He loves them.

SIMON. You speak of him like you might speak of Jesus.

JAKE. Well, I would never go that far. Except that, some times, I think it is Jesus I see in him.

SIMON. (Pause) I wish I could have met this man again. (Looks at his watch.) But I am coming up fast on my next appointment.

JAKE. I must apologize. Mister Vanderwaal said he would come, I have never known him... To break his word.

(SIMON extends his hand, which JAKE takes. There is now a certain respect between the two men. SIMON puts on his overcoat, goes toward the door. As he opens it, JAKE speaks out.)

JAKE. Please, Mister Katzman. This is a very old man. He is breaking apart. The war was long ago, another lifetime... Can you not find it in your heart...

SIMON. To forgive him.

JAKE. Yes.

SIMON. If only I could. If only I could.

JAKE. So there is no forgiveness in your religion for a Rudi Vanderwaal?

SIMON. (Looks at his watch, decides to take a minute more.) Pastor Neufeld. In your studies, you had Hebrew? (JAKE nods.) So you know the word, "hesed"?

JAKE. "Steadfast love," or "loving kindness" - at least, this is how it is usually translated in our scriptures. It is used only of God's love, is it not?

SIMON. Our scripture is full of hesed. When you Christians look into the Law and the Prophets, what you call the "Old Testament," you see only legalism. We see only hesed. So do not think, ever, that we Jews know nothing of forgiveness.

JAKE. Indeed. But forgiveness for whom? For Rudi Vanderwaal?

SIMON. Yes. Perhaps. But that is not a matter for me -- or for you -- to decide.

JAKE. Because only God can forgive?

SIMON. (Shakes his head. After a moment:) If you wrong me, I can forgive you. But if you wrong your wife, it is not for me to forgive - that is a matter between you and her. If Rudi Vanderwaal wishes to be forgiven, let him go to the hundred and thirty five thousand Dutch Jews purged from his homeland. Let him go to the ghettos and hiding places of Holland, let him go to the Jews of Auschwitz to seek forgiveness!

JAKE. Or to their flesh and blood.

SIMON. (Beat) Yes. Or to their flesh and blood. (Beat. Someone knocks on RUDI's front door, unheard by SIMON and JAKE. SIMON checks his watch. Rising:) My time is more than gone. There is no sign of your friend, and I must go. I am sorry.

(He departs. JAKE hurries around to the outside of the VANDERWAAL's front door, knocks again. There is still no answer, he tries the door, it opens.)

JAKE. Rudi? Rudi.

(He hears the sound of running water in the bathtub. Lights up on the bathroom, where RUDI fills a pail, which he takes to the pigeon coops for cleaning. Having had no answer, JAKE enters, goes upstairs.)

JAKE. Rudi.

(RUDI is startled at the unexpected voice, but carries on as if he hasn't heard. JAKE walks around to RUDI's line of sight.)

JAKE. Rudi.

(RUDI nods, keeps on with his work. He is busily cleaning the pigeon coop, feverishly scrubbing it down.)

JAKE. You have embarrassed me, Rudi Vanderwaal. I go out on a limb for you, set this whole thing up, all this talk I make to him, the right to come face to face with your accuser, all of this, and then what? No Rudi.

You could not face your accuser? You dared not? Hid away up here. Almost I have to wonder, are you full with guilt? Hiding things, things you are afraid would come out face to face with this Jew, maybe?

RUDI. We all are hiding things.

JAKE. Oh, are we?

RUDI. Hiding them in Jesus.

JAKE. That is not the same thing.

RUDI. Is it not?

JAKE. Not the same as hiding from Simon Katzman. Jesus hasn't hidden you away up in your attic, that is Rudi Vanderwaal and his fear, or his guilt, or his something else I don't know what, that has hidden him away up in here with his birds!

(Beat)

RUDI. We are all hiding things.

(An impasse. JAKE turns to leave, then stops, gathers himself.)

JAKE. Rudi. I have done what I could. But without you coming along in this, I... I cannot do it all by myself. Any more, I cannot be your hiding place. I cannot see into your soul. But can you? I have to wonder what darkness this Simon Katzman has found in there.

RUDI. We are all hiding things.

JAKE. Stop saying that, Rudi! You would make of us all--

RUDI. What, have you never sinned then, pastor?

JAKE. Certainly.

RUDI. So tell me about it. Tell me all about it. (Beat) So tell me! Tell the world! Tell Simon Katzman, tell us all!

JAKE. Rudi, calm yourself--

RUDI. So you have no sin.

JAKE. I did not say such a thing. I hold resentments. I am too cautious. I lack the courage to take action quickly when the situation calls for--

RUDI. No, Jake! Sin! You are trying to make me feel bad? Like the worst sinner of all, or so? These sins of yours are nothing. Flyspecks! Was it these drove you to the cross? Have you never sinned? Or are they hiding?

JAKE. Rudi...

RUDI. Have you bought the dirty magazines at the Chinaman's store?

JAKE. No, I--

RUDI. WHAT THEN!? Your wife. You had relations with her before--

JAKE. Rudi! What is--

RUDI. With some other woman then?

JAKE. --wrong with you?

RUDI. You visit the prostitutes maybe?

JAKE. This is offensive!

RUDI. (Beat) Yes, Dominee. It is. For me to press you to tell me these dark secrets, this is wrong. It is best they be hidden. Is it not? Hidden in Christ. Hidden in the light, ja, pastor? (Beat) Now you see why this man I could not meet. This Katzman. I am your friend-- was your friend. And yet you cannot even tell me certain things. Why is this? With me your secrets would be safe. Hidden with Rudi. Yet you ask me to take these hidden things, these forgotten things, and bring them out to show this Katzman. This Katzman who goes to the newspapers. For the whole world--

(A pounding at the door. RUDI hears, JAKE does not. RUDI is apprehensive. He puts down his tools, goes downstairs, JAKE following after. RUDI steels himself, throws open the door. No one is there. Now the pounding is at the kitchen door.)

RUDI. Dominee. You must go.

JAKE. Rudi...

RUDI. Do not argue with me!

(RUDI strides to the kitchen door, JAKE following uncertainly. As they turn their backs on the front door, CONRAD comes in the front door, closes it behind himself, heads upstairs as they reach the kitchen. RUDI flings open the kitchen door.)

JAKE. Rudi, what is it? What is wrong?

RUDI. Nothing is wrong. Nothing you would understand, not without being there. But I'll put a stop to them.

JAKE. Rudi, I'm not going.

(RUDI hears as CONRAD begins to run the bath, is all but pushing JAKE out the kitchen door.)

RUDI. Not without having your name in the papers, this kind of trouble, people knocking all night so you can't sleep...

JAKE. Rudi, you need someone here with you.

RUDI. (Beat) Netty's here, of course.

(JAKE doesn't believe this.)

RUDI. You hear? She's running a bath.

(JAKE listens, hears the bath. Relaxes some.)

JAKE. You're sure you will be all right?

RUDI. You worry too much. But I'll see to them this time, Dominee...

JAKE. (Beat) Pastor.

RUDI. This time they'll leave us be.

(Just as JAKE speaks he steps out the kitchen door, the knocking comes again from elsewhere, punctuated with PIETER calling, "Rudi. Rudi. I want to have a word with you. Rudi" - which JAKE does not hear. RUDI, distracted, gets JAKE completely out the door, closes it.)

PIETER. (Coming down the stairs into the living room:) Rudi.

RUDI. Coming!

PIETER. In here, Rudi. (RUDI goes to the living room. Three knocks on the front door.) We've got to do something, don't we, Rudi? To put a stop to this.

RUDI. I'm afraid, Papa.

PIETER. Yes, I know. We're all frightened these days. But I think the time has come, you're old enough now to do something about it.

(Five more knocks.)

RUDI. I am, Papa.

PIETER. We know which one is the ringleader. An old Jew, just came here a short while ago, with his family. He seems harmless enough, for a Jew. But a real trouble causer, this one.

RUDI. I'll see to him.

PIETER. That's my Rudi.

(More pounding. This time it keeps up.)

PIETER. (Going to the kitchen door, RUDI behind him.) We know where he's hiding out. We turn him over, him and his family, we'll be done with all this. Leave us be, him and his kind.

(They go around, outside, to the front door. It is RUDI who is pounding, now.)

RUDI. Let me in! I'll find you, you-- (Throws his shoulder into the door, it flies open. Begins searching the house...) Tell me where he is! I know you're hidden here. Where are they? You can't stay hidden forever! I'll teach you to leave us be! You will! After this. (Finally flings open the closet door, in the bedroom. Behind it stands the MAN.) Haahh! (He grabs him by the front of his black coat, spins him around and pushes him so he lands with his back against the bed frame.) Where are they? Where is the hiding place? (Grabs the MAN again, manhandles him down the hall to the bathroom, forces him to his knees before the tub, grabs him by the hair.) Now! Jew! Tell me?

(Slowly, deliberately the MAN nods his head.)

THE MAN. Very well.

(The MAN comes unsteadily to his feet, then looks into RUDI's face. A moment, neither of them moves.)

THE MAN. I thought you were a new man, Mister Vanderwaal.

(RUDI is shocked, lets go of him. The MAN rises unsteadily to his feet, leads RUDI to the pigeon room.)

THE MAN. Here. The hiding place. In here. No one looks here. It will be safe in here. (Begins to take the shawl from his neck.) But only one more chance, Rudi. You must set to work at once.

(THE MAN holds out the shawl to RUDI, in a bundle. After a moment, RUDI begins slowly to reach for it. Blackout.)

ACT III

(The middle of the night. NETTY is sleeping in her bed. The front door opens from the outside. It is RUDI, who begins hauling in lumber, tools from outside. NETTY wakes.)

NETTY. (Quietly:) Rudi? (Seeing he is not in bed with her, a bit louder:) Rudi? (RUDI knocks something over in the living room. NETTY slips out of bed, pulls on her housecoat, peers downstairs.) Rudi? Is that you.

RUDI. Shhh!

NETTY. Rudi, what?... (NETTY flicks the light on.)

RUDI. (An order - whispered, clenched:) No! Not the light!

(NETTY shuts it off. RUDI peers out into the darkness, carefully closes the door. Quickly crosses to his wife in the dark.)

RUDI. (Much warmer, gentler:) Do you not understand? Everything must seem as usual. The neighbours, if they see a light in the night time, they see Vanderwaal with all this...

NETTY. Rudi?

RUDI. No questions, liefijen. The less you know, the less they can force from you. This is for me to do. Now, back to bed. Everything will be all right.

NETTY. Rudi...

RUDI. I love you.

(Rather sudden light shift and we are in the past: leaf-dappled light, the sound of the river. RUDI reaches inside his pockets, brings out the Dutch boy and Dutch girl statues, gives them to NETTY.)

NETTY. Werner. These are sweet. I... What... Where did you get them.

(RUDI reaches over, takes her hand and takes one of the statues, turns it bottom up.)

NETTY. Werner! You carved these?

RUDI. (He nods.) For you.

NETTY. They are so beautiful. I... They must have taken a very long time.

RUDI. But you need to know something. The names I have carved in the bottom...

NETTY. Our names. (She reads from the bottom of each:) "Janette Heidinga"... And "Werner Epp." (She smiles, perhaps self-conscious, awkward, embarrassed.)

RUDI. Only... I would not have carved them that way, now. The names... You see, back in Holland, I... How do I say this, so long I have hidden it

away... Janette, my name is not Epp at all. Not Werner Epp. My name back in Holland, it was Vanderwaal. But because of what I did in that country, because of the war, I--

(NETTY leans over, puts a gentle finger across his lips. Shakes her head.)

NETTY. You have told the Lord of these things?

(RUDI nods.)

NETTY. And they cause you pain? Sorrow?

(RUDI nods.)

NETTY. Then they are gone. Now that you live for God, these things you do not have to go around hiding anymore. They are hidden in Jesus.

(NETTY takes her finger away from his lips. Looks at the two carvings.)

NETTY. Thank you, Werner.

RUDI. Rudi.

NETTY. Rudi.

(NETTY leans slowly toward him to kiss him, the lights suddenly shift back to the present time, the living room. She stops, notices the carvings in her hands, the names carved in the base: her husband is suddenly a stranger to her, she pulls back, perhaps she weeps. Leaves quickly. RUDI pulls in a last bit of tools or lumber from outside, closes the door, begins to carry his materials up to the attic as, elsewhere on the stage, the lights come up on SIMON and ANNA, in the hotel room.)

ANNA. But can't they tie this whole thing up in the courts like, forever? What's to say this guy ever serves a minute in any jail?

SIMON. (Pulling files from his briefcase:) Paper. Paper, my girl, paper. See here - court decision, 1947, The Hague, Netherlands, Rudiger Vanderwaal. June 17. Then, July 3, interred in Westerbork - Rudiger Vanderwaal. Then this, a photocopy I make in the archives - wonderful record keepers, we Dutch - missing from the holding camp, August 10. And that's where I lost the trail, to begin with.

Until this call from you here, this last summer. Still I have the envelope on where I write this what you said: "R Vanderwaal, 347 East 38th Avenue" and then this phone number. Copy of the letter I write to Immigration, copy of Immigration document from 1960: "Vanderwaal, Rudiger. Birthplace, Apeldoorn, Netherlands. Country of departure: Paraguay." Paraguay. A good place to hide, after the war, far from the old country.

ANNA. And that's enough?

SIMON. Plus this, what they found for me, the people at the Weisenthal Centre. They have the money to go down there, down to Paraguay, fill in the blank spaces. A record of Vanderwaal leaving Paraguay, yes, but when arriving? Just to tie up this last end. And they find this.

ANNA. "Certificate of Baptism. Peace Mennonite Church. Easter, 1958."

SIMON. And the name.

ANNA. "Rudiger Vanderwaal." But written in over top of something else...

SIMON. Original name.

ANNA. "Something Epp."

SIMON. Werner.

ANNA. Werner Epp.

SIMON. And never after this any more record of any Werner Epp, not in the church records, not in the civic: only Rudi Vanderwaal. Marriage certificate, application to emigrate to Canada... But this (He refers to the Baptism Certificate), this right here, this is the link. After this, no more Epp: before this, no Vanderwaal, only Epp.

(SIMON hands ANNA one last document.)

ANNA. "Werner Epp." Registers as immigrant to Paraguay, January '49. Displaced person, Austria?

SIMON. Or wherever. Why he should tell the truth about this, when he lies about his name?

ANNA. True enough.

SIMON. We have him. In black and white, every step. The crime, the hiding, the lying, the covering tracks, the hiding in this church, the hiding finally in Canada. A clear trail. Deportation hearing, a few days with all of this, a week at most, and he is back to serve his sentence in his homeland.

ANNA. And what about when he's finished his term? You think he'll come back here?

(Pause)

SIMON. Finished his term?

(Crossfade to PASTOR NEUFELD's office.)

NETTY. I don't know him.

JAKE. He is under quite a lot of pressure.

NETTY. No, pastor. I do not mean only he snaps at me, or even that he is what you would call depressed. I mean that he... I mean, who was he ever? How do I know? Especially with how he is acting. You should see him, Pastor...

JAKE. I should. How I wish he would let me.

NETTY. It is hard for you too?

JAKE. Yesterday, you were out, I came round, to bring him at least the bulletin from church, he won't open the door even.

NETTY. It is so hard for my Rudi. Always he hated to miss, and it's now, what, three weeks straight. He's so afraid. To see anyone. Talk to anyone.

JAKE. With you, what does he say?

(NETTY only shakes her head. JAKE puts his hand over hers. She collects herself. After a moment:)

NETTY. Me, I'm fine. I will be just fine.

JAKE. You look tired, Netty.

NETTY. I don't sleep so much. It is at night my Rudi, he is up, sawing and working away.

JAKE. At night.

NETTY. But he won't let me in there, up in the attic he works and when he's working, the door is shut. And when it's open, in the day, when he sleeps, I look in there and... I look in there and there is nothing.

JAKE. The birds are gone?

NETTY. Oh, no. Still there. But nothing is changed, is what I mean. All this work he is doing all through the night, and in the morning, nothing. I think it is in a dream sometimes. Only I know a dream from not a dream. I know that many times at night, I wake up from what is a dream, and what I wake up to is this empty bed, and the sound of building, and that is not a dream. Or I wake up to this man in bed beside me, only it is not my Rudi any more.

(NETTY stops speaking. Studies JAKE a minute, then looks through her large handbag to find something. Finds it, doesn't pull it out, keeps her hand on it in the bag, looks up at JAKE.)

NETTY. I start to think, I don't know this man. Married for all these years, but now all of a sudden I don't know him. Only then last night I have this dream, and I wake up so scared pastor, so scared. And now I remember that maybe I always knew this, that maybe my Rudi never was who I thought.

(NETTY takes from her handbag a pair of little painted wood carvings, a Dutch boy and girl. Sets them on the corner of JAKE's desk.)

NETTY. This dream I had, it wasn't the first time. Same dream as I had just a short time before my wedding. Isn't that strange, that this comes back to me so much later? Just a dream, but the same dream.

It is my wedding day. And I'm all excited. Very, very happy. And I come down the aisle, all dressed up so pretty, and there's my Rudi, and we stand in front of the Dominee, and he is saying, "Do you, Janette Heidinga, take this man--" and then he says some name I do not know -- "Do you take him to be your lawful wedded husband?" And I look at my Rudi, only it isn't my Rudi any more. It is someone else. A stranger. A face like Rudi's, only I know it's not him, it's someone else pretending to be him. No smile at all, and that's Rudi you know, always the smile. And I try to tell the Dominee, "Stop this now! This isn't my Rudi! This is some other man. I can't marry him! I want my Rudi!" Only I open my mouth, and no sound comes. And I try so hard to speak out, to make the words come, only I can't, and it wakes me up.

And then this morning, I remember that dream, it comes back to me like I'm not quite out of it yet, not all woke up yet you know? Only this time in the dream the man who's supposed to be my Rudi isn't a man at all. He's a statue. And I remember..."

(Crossfade to attic. RUDI is on the floor, gathering up newspapers which have been placed there to catch the sawdust.)

RUDI. (Talking to the pigeons, matching their tone) I remember, I remember. Did you think I would do all this work and then forget to clean up? And spoil everything? No, no, no. Just a little nap I needed, and then wait until we had the house to ourselves, then we just tidy up these little shavings, this little bit of sawdust, we burn it up all nice and tidy, and nobody ever knows. And soon we're all ready for them, all--

(A knocking on the front door. RUDI freezes, then quickly takes up his bundle of newspaper, hurries downstairs, shoves it in a fireplace or furnace, the person at the door knocks again, RUDI brushes his hands on his pants as he hurries to the door. Opens it just an inch or so.)

RUDI. Conrad! Come in. Come in quickly.

(RUDI peers outside, then closes and locks the door behind CONRAD who carries two bags from a hardware store.)

RUDI. Anyone, did they see you?

CONRAD. See me?...

RUDI. See you come in here?

CONRAD. Not that I saw.

(RUDI begins to dig through the bags, then stops suddenly, looks at CONRAD suspiciously.)

RUDI. Did you look?

CONRAD. Look?

RUDI. Inside the parcels. Did you look?

CONRAD. No.

(RUDI smiles broadly.)

RUDI. You're a good man. A good man. These days, there's just so many you can't trust. Everybody suspicious about everybody else. I don't like that.

CONRAD. I suppose there's good reasons, though.

RUDI. I suppose.

CONRAD. Now you listen to me, Rudi. If there's anything else you need, anything more I can do--

RUDI. Oh no. Pretty well under control, I'd say.

CONRAD. Have you got a good lawyer?

(RUDI looks at him blankly.)

CONRAD. I can talk to people. I know people.

RUDI. (Considers this a moment, then begins to show CONRAD to the door.) Well, you do that Conrad. You talk to people. I've got to finish up around here, now. You do what you like.

CONRAD. I will. (He is going out the door.)

RUDI. Yes. You do what you have to do.

CONRAD. We're behind you one hundred percent, me and Hanni, you know that.

(RUDI smiles at CONRAD.)

CONRAD. We know what's going on here. Not like some. We know. And we'll do what we can.

(CONRAD reaches out his hand, RUDI shakes it.)

RUDI. Well, that's all we can do. All anyone can ask. (CONRAD is gone, but RUDI continues talking to him.) You do what you can. (RUDI closes the door.) Maybe it's not much, maybe nobody ever finds out, maybe they do, maybe they don't like you for doing it, but you do what you have to do.

(RUDI picks up the two bags and heads up to the attic. Fade to black. In the darkness, we hear SIMON's voice. After a moment, the lights begin to fade up on HANNI pattering in her kitchen. She has the radio on: it is SIMON's press conference. Once she realizes what she is hearing, she stops her tidying, stands perfectly still, listening intently.)

SIMON. It has begun. At last. To this point the Canadian government has been slow and uncooperative. Even since my arrival here, the authorities have continued to drag their feet as though this whole unpleasant business might somehow all go away if only they kept shut their eyes long enough. Now at last we begin to see some light at the end of the tunnel, however. Today I receive word that a court date has been set for Thursday. To hear the case against Mister Vanderwaal. Then, depending upon Mister Vanderwaal's plea, we move to sentencing or to trial. Either way, justice shall be served.

(Part way through the broadcast, CONRAD has come in: HANNI shushes him, they stand listening together. When it comes to an end, she turns the radio off.)

HANNI. It's that Jew again. I didn't think it would come to this. That they'd take him so serious. Some people, they'd believe anything.

CONRAD. I was over to Rudi's just now. He's not so well.

HANNI. There's got to be more we should do. Conrad? These are our friends, and here they are having their whole life on the radio, they don't even get to tell their side of the story.

CONRAD. This thing isn't just about them, you know Hanni. Not just about the two of them. It's much bigger than just that, you know. Much bigger than that.

HANNI. These people are Christians, Christians what all this is being done to, Conrad.

CONRAD. I said to Rudi, I said to him, "I'll do what I can, Rudi Vanderwaal." We're not going to just sit by. I'll get on the telephone.

(Crossfade to RUDI with the pigeons.)

RUDI. Finished. We are done now, my little ones. Except for the final test, and that's not up to us now, is it? So we just wait, ja? Wait til he comes again. And pray that it goes well. (Beat) I think now we celebrate. I think now I could do with a drink. And you? Very well.

(RUDI takes a large water tray out of the cage, closes the cage. He goes to the bathroom, turns on the tap in the bathtub, watches the water run, puts his hand under the flow...)

RUDI. It is no use, Dominee. They will come for me. If not here in Paraguay, then they will hunt me down in my next hiding place. Even in Canada.

DOMINEE. Not your hiding place, Werner. Your home.

RUDI. My home is Holland! And that is where I belong.

DOMINEE. No, Werner. Not any longer. You are a new man, living the new life. (Reading from the Baptismal Certificate, which is folded neatly inside Rudi's Bible:) "Certificate Of Baptism. Peace Church, Colonia Mennonita, Paraguay. Easter, 1958." Easter. You die to the old, you start all over again with the new life. "Old things are past away..." And yet you persist in clinging to those old things, Werner! Let them go. Soon you will be a husband, with maybe many children. God calls you to leave the old things behind...

(RUDI takes the Baptismal Certificate from the Dominee, takes an eraser, hastily begins erasing something.)

DOMINEE. Werner!

(The Dominee reaches to take back the certificate, but RUDI looks at him sharply, perhaps puts out a hand, stops him. RUDI finishes the erasing quickly, then writes something new on the form. Blows the ink dry, hands it back to the Dominee.)

DOMINEE. But Werner...

RUDI. Rudi. It is Rudi now. Rudi Vanderwaal, that is my name. (Beat) You have persuaded me, Dominee. You are right. A new man. A new life. And for this new life, no more the old name. No more Werner Epp... I am Vanderwaal. (Beat) I became Epp only to escape that place, to hide from my past. Always, Epp was a lie, "a refuge of lies." No more. Now I am Vanderwaal again.

So we will start this new life in Vancouver, Netty and me. But our name is Vanderwaal. On our marriage certificate, Vanderwaal. In the phone book in this new place, Rudi Vanderwaal. If they want to find me, it is up to God to hide me.

(A knock at the door - sudden crossfade to SIMON's hotel room. ANNA crosses to the door, opens to find NETTY there.)

NETTY. I am looking for a Mister Katzman.

ANNA. That would be my uncle. I'm Anna Cummings...

(SIMON appears.)

NETTY. Mister Katzman. My name is Netty Vanderwaal.

SIMON. Please come in.

NETTY. I...

SIMON. Do come in. We have some coffee.

ANNA. Well, sort of coffee...

NETTY. (Coming in.) Thank you, no. I cannot stay... (An awkward silence.) Mister Katzman. Please. Please stop this. Let my husband alone.

SIMON. Mrs. Vanderwaal...

NETTY. He is a good man, my husband. A good man. What has he done to you, Mister Katzman? Why must you... Do this? Why must you come into his life and... If only you could see him, Mister Katzman, what this is doing to him. It is punishment enough. Why must you go on?

SIMON. Why?

NETTY. Yes, why? You don't even know this man, yet you come half way around the world, fifty years later, you hunt this man down and take away his happiness. Why?

SIMON. Why have you come to me today, Mrs. Vanderwaal?

(She is nonplussed.)

NETTY. Why... What do you mean?

SIMON. What makes you come here to speak to me?

NETTY. Well, do you mean?... I come for my husband, of course.

SIMON. Why do you come to me on behalf of your husband?

NETTY. But that is obvious. Because... He is my husband. Because I love him.

SIMON. Because he is a part of you, yes? Because he is your own flesh and blood. Because you cannot stand to see anything happen to him. (Beat) I understand. I feel the same way about certain people. Annaliese here. My wife, back in Holland. And my father, my mother, my sisters, a younger brother. Many cousins, uncles, aunts, grandparents. Only, you see, apart from one sister, and her daughter here, and my wife, these others all are dead, Mrs.

Vanderwaal. They died in the war, you see. We all of us are Jewish. (Beat) So this is what brings me here, to Canada. Do you see? For just this same reason as you come to me. Flesh and blood, Mrs. Vanderwaal. Flesh and blood.

NETTY. Mister Katzman, I am sorry about what happened to them. Terribly sorry.

SIMON. Thank you. You are kind.

NETTY. If only you could know my Rudi! If only you could see his heart, how kind he is. Then you would know what I know, Mr Katzman, what I know with all my heart. That you have hunted down the wrong man, that you are destroying an innocent, a good man!

SIMON. (Taken aback.) Excuse me. I don't--

NETTY. To you he is only a name. A name in a phone book that matches up with a name on your list, a list of men who harmed your people. Your family. But this Rudi Vanderwaal is not the one on your list, he is not--

SIMON. Mrs. Vanderwaal, we have all the documents, we can show them to you if--

NETTY. Documents! Documents! I am talking about a man, a flesh and blood man, and you talk about pieces of paper! This is not the same man as you have in your documents. He is changed. He is forgiven. If you could only have been there, if you could have seen this young man shed his old self, wash that terrible past away in the river there, lay down in the water and die! I understand, Mister Katzman. I understand that the man who did what that Rudi Vanderwaal did should have to die for his sins. But if only you could see, if only you could believe it, that Rudi Vanderwaal did die.

(Silence)

SIMON. Mrs. Vanderwaal. You may not be able to believe what I am going to say either, but I must say it. I grieve for your husband. I grieve for you, and wonder almost if I have done the right thing. But how can I see the heart? How can you see the heart? Of your husband. I think you do not know, but many, many who have done unspeakable things - the Nazis, and many others who persecute and torture in other places, because this still goes on - many of these people find a convenient hiding place in religion. Even some carry right on with their terrible deeds, but to their families and friends they are good, kind--

NETTY. My Rudi has left these ways behind! What more can he do? What more would you have him do?

SIMON. I would have him suffer consequences. This is terribly hard to say to you, who loves this man. To say to you, face to face. But you have come to speak truthfully with me, so... I say this. A man who takes responsibility for his actions does not run from the consequences. He does not hide himself away where he cannot be found out, hide in another country, hide behind a false name--

NETTY. He is not hiding behind a false name!

SIMON. He did when it suited him. Once his tracks were covered, he switched it again.

NETTY. Mister Katzman, you are wrong. So wrong.

SIMON. That may be. But it may be also that you are wrong. And as long as your husband runs from his past, as long as he will not own his sins and suffer for them, take up his cross maybe you would call this, as long as he builds for himself lies and hiding places... Then I think he is not the man you believe him to be.

(Silence. Netty begins to weep. ANNA moves to go to her.)

ANNA. Mrs. Vanderwaal...

NETTY. Good day, Mister Katzman.

SIMON. Good day, Mrs. Vanderwaal. I am sorry.

(NETTY nods to ANNA, unable to say any more. She leaves. (Four or five knocks. Fade to black. More knocking, crossfade to RUDI in his living room, sleeping on the couch. He slowly wakes up, hears the knocking, scrambles up the stairs to the attic, looks frantically around to see that there are no clues to the work he has been doing. Sees a shaving, picks it up, begins to open the door to the pigeon cage. More knocking, he hears the voice of CONRAD:)

CONRAD. Rudi? Rudi. It's Conrad. Can I see you for a moment?

(RUDI closes the door, hurries downstairs, calling out:)

RUDI. One minute. Hold your horses.

(Opens the door, looks furtively outside, lets CONRAD in, locks the door behind him.)

RUDI. I am sorry. I thought maybe it was... I was sleeping.

CONRAD. So early you were sleeping?

RUDI. Oh, you know. The night times aren't so good, I have dreams, can't sleep so good. But it's almost over.

CONRAD. That's what I say too.

RUDI. Yes. I am ready for them now...

(A sudden knocking. RUDI is torn: doesn't know whether to open the door with CONRAD there, what to do with CONRAD. After a moment:)

NETTY. (At the kitchen door:) Rudi! The door is locked! I haven't my keys, Rudi!?

(RUDI, relieved, rushes to back door to let her in.)

NETTY. (As the door opens:) Rudi, oh Rudi, the door was locked, I'm so sorry, I thought it was only a few minutes I would be gone, I... The door was locked, I thought they came for you already, I never should have gone... I was afraid maybe you were all alone when they came for you, the house would be empty-- (She sees CONRAD.) Oh. Mister de Groening. I'm so sorry, I...

CONRAD. Netty, it is just fine. I understand.

(An awkward moment, where there is nothing more to say.)

NETTY. Well, I'll just leave you two to... I think I'll just go upstairs, lie down just a bit...

(The two men nod. NETTY goes upstairs.)

NETTY. You just wake me when... If...

RUDI. Yes, liefijen.

(She is gone into the bedroom, slips on her housecoat, lies down.)

CONRAD. I must go. Leave you to-- With your wife. I have only a little time, in fact. But I wanted to drop by. There are a number of us...

RUDI. Yes?

CONRAD. We just wanted you to know. Don't give up the fight. You're not in this alone.

RUDI. No.

CONRAD. We're behind you a hundred percent.

RUDI. That's good.

CONRAD. (Pressing some bills into RUDI's hand.) For you. To keep up the fight.

RUDI. Pardon me?

CONRAD. You are not alone. There are many good people like us.

RUDI. Like us.

CONRAD. (Taking a book out of his inside pocket, offering it to RUDI, who doesn't move to take it.) Against the Jews. It's a very good thing that you are doing, Vanderwaal, very important. (Beat. RUDI still has not taken the book, so CONRAD places it on the end table.) The Masons, Catholics, the liberals. Secular humanists. They won't succeed. It's all Jewish money behind it, but as long as there are a few good men--

RUDI. There's hundreds of dollars here.

CONRAD. I'm sure there will be legal costs. Get a better lawyer. The man who wrote this, he specializes: I wrote his number inside the cover.

RUDI. But Netty got us a lawyer. I don't need lawyers for this, I have a better way. But Netty--

CONRAD. That DeVries, seems like a good man, I know he's a church-goer, but there's Jews in that firm--

RUDI. What did you say?

CONRAD. There's Jews in DeVries firm. Didn't you know that? you've got to be more careful, Vanderwaal.

RUDI. Get out.

(Beat)

CONRAD. Not saying he's not a good man, God-fearing. But you'd be surprised how many people don't understand. The Jews they're all in it together, if we don't do the same--

RUDI. Get out. Out of my house. (RUDI tries to make CONRAD take the money back.)

CONRAD. No, Rudi, we think you should--

RUDI. Get out! (Holds the money out to CONRAD. Beat, then CONRAD turns, walks toward the door. NETTY appears at the top of the stairs.)

NETTY. Rudi?

CONRAD. When you cool down--

RUDI. (Throws the money at CONRAD, NETTY retreats to her room.) Get out! You and your thirty guilders! I won't have it! Get out! (CONRAD closes the door behind himself, not quite shut. RUDI picks up the book, throws it after him, it strikes the door and falls to the floor. Almost immediately, there is a knock at the door.)

RUDI. Go away! Go away!

(He runs to the door to close it, sees that there is no one there. The knocking continues. Runs into the kitchen. No one at that door. More knocking.)

RUDI. It is begun.

(RUDI begins to run up the stairs, remembers the money, book on the floor. Runs back down, desperately trying to pick it all up, hide it in the attic. As he goes to hide it in a trapdoor he has built into the bottom of the pigeon coop, there is another knock.)

MAN. (Outside the front door:) Mister Vanderwaal. Please.

(RUDI stops his frenetic activity. Comes down, opens the door. In steps the MAN. He holds in his arms a bundle, wrapped in a shawl. RUDI hesitates.)

RUDI. You have come.

THE MAN. Please. In your house they will never suspect. I have no food for the child. If it cries out, they will hear.

(Beat)

MAN. Please.

RUDI. Come inside.

THE MAN. (Shakes his head.) Where would you hide me?

(The MAN holds out the bundle. RUDI takes it, the MAN is gone into the night, closing the door behind him as RUDI looks inside the bundle at the baby. Suddenly, a pounding at the door. RUDI is frozen a moment, until:)

VOICE. Open! Jew Lover!

(RUDI runs upstairs, first to the bedroom where his wife is sleeping, stops a moment, the pounding resumes, more regularly this time: they are going to smash in the door. The baby begins to whimper. Another moment's paralysis, then he rushes to the pigeon room.)

NETTY. (In the bedroom:) Rudi? Rudi? There's someone at the door. Rudi?

(As RUDI enters the pigeon room, we hear the sound of pigeons, masking the baby's cry. He opens the trapdoor in the bottom of the cage, lays the child inside, says a silent, fervent prayer as, downstairs, the door gives way. He closes the trapdoor, spreads feathers over it, closes the coop, looks to heaven, rushes to the bedroom.)

NETTY. It's someone at the door.

(Downstairs, CONRAD, SIMON and JAKE burst in through the front door, all dressed in the uniform of the Landwacht.)

SIMON. Vanderwaal! Rudiger Vanderwaal!

CONRAD. It won't do to hide!

JAKE. Come on out, Rudi. We're your friends.

(Silence)

JAKE. Alright then. We find you and the Jews both, then!

(They begin turning over the furniture, pulling open doors.)

CONRAD. Jew Lover!

(RUDI appears at the top of the stairs.)

JAKE. (To the others:) Wait! (CONRAD continues tearing the place up. JAKE grabs him by the back of the jacket, pulls him backward, hard. Silence.)

RUDI. Jake. You say you are my friend. Why do you...

JAKE. Rudi. I'm sorry it had to come to this.

RUDI. Ever since that man came, why do you start to treat me like this, like you are my enemy...

CONRAD. What man?

(RUDI becomes silent.)

CONRAD. He means the Jew! (He kicks something over.)

JAKE. Now, Rudi. Some of the boys here don't understand. About your father, about all you've done for Holland. About how helpful you've been in the past. Ja? Why change sides now?

(NETTY comes out of her room, sleepy, frightened.)

NETTY. What do they want, Rudi?

SIMON. It's not too late, Mister Vanderwaal.

RUDI. Go back to bed, Netty. (He moves down the stairs.)

NETTY. Rudi?...

JAKE. We saw him come here.

RUDI. I don't--

CONRAD. No more of your lies, Vanderwaal! With the little one, we saw them come right up your drive.

SIMON. It's a wonderful trap, Rudi. You lure them in here, tell them you'll keep them safe, and then once they're all rounded up for us, you give them over. Very clever. Good for you, Rudi. (Beat) Now. Where are they?

(Silence.)

SIMON. Where are they, Vanderwaal?

RUDI. I don't know who you mean. There is no one--

(JAKE punches him in the stomach, sudden, vicious. RUDI doubles over, CONRAD pushes him, he falls over backwards. JAKE gestures with his head, CONRAD and JAKE charge up the stairs, knock NETTY aside. CONRAD begins searching the bedroom: hauling things from under the bed, pulling clothes from the closet, tearing off bedsheets, slashing the mattress. JAKE turns on the tap in the bathtub, looks quickly around as he heads back downstairs. During all of this, the interrogation continues, with physical intimidation increasingly matching the verbal abuse.)

SIMON. Talk! Traitor. Where is the hiding place? What have you been doing in here at night? Building, building, building, this is what de Groening tells us.

JAKE. We can see to it they go easy on you.

SIMON. You think you're untouchable? Nothing sticks to old Vanderwaal? We'll just see.

JAKE. A word from me and you'll only be deported. I hear they'll take people like you in Paraguay.

SIMON. Paraguay! Of course! They'll take any trash at all in Paraguay.

(CONRAD emerges from a room with the Dutch Blitz cards, holds the box high over NETTY cowering on the floor, opens it and the hundreds of cards drift to the floor over her.)

NETTY. Stop.

CONRAD. What's that? Thought the Jew Lover liked cards.

NETTY. Please.

CONRAD. "Stop. Please."

(CONRAD continues mocking her as she whimpers "Stop, please, stop, please...")

SIMON. (Grabbing RUDI by the hair, pulling him to his feet:) So where are they?

RUDI. Where are?... (RUDI is suddenly short of breath: desperate, he gasps for air.)

SIMON. ANSWER MY QUESTIONS!! The old man and the brat, where are they?

JAKE. Are you going to be reasonable, or do we have to--

(RUDI clutches his chest, slumps to his knees.)

CONRAD. (Emerging from the bathroom:) All ready!

JAKE. Alright Mister Vanderwaal. Enough hiding, enough pretending, enough lies.

SIMON. Rudi. This is your last chance. Your life or theirs. Tell us.

(RUDI, dazed, straightens up. Looks at all of them.)

JAKE. Just tell us where they are, my friend.

RUDI. (Beat) No. I will not.

CONRAD. Okay then, old man. Upstairs!

(CONRAD and SIMON begin hauling RUDI up the stairs. NETTY tries to stop them, CONRAD pulls her off, throws her down the hall toward the bedroom. The others get RUDI into the bathroom:)

JAKE. A cool bath to refresh your memory!

(They force him into the bathtub, which is still filling with water. RUDI cries out.)

JAKE. One last chance, my friend, before your baptism. Are you going to tell us where they are?

RUDI. Jake...

(SIMON nods, CONRAD forces RUDI's head under the water. Now he struggles again, frantically, the others help hold him under. NETTY tries to pull them off,

RUDI struggles free for a moment, CONRAD lets go of RUDI and manhandles NETTY back to the bedroom as JAKE grabs RUDI by the hair. NETTY screams, everything is suddenly silent, no movement.)

JAKE. Tell us, Rudi. Show us what you're made of.

SIMON. Your last chance, truly, my friend.

JAKE. Just tell us.

RUDI. (Beat.) No. No.

(As he begins to say "No" a third time, it all explodes: NETTY screams as pushes her back down onto the bed, covers her mouth with his hand as the others push RUDI under the water, howling with rage. Blackout. In the dark, the screaming and fighting stop suddenly, leaving only a knocking on a door and the water running. Lights up slowly.)

NETTY. Rudi. Rudi? (Enters from bedroom, pulling on housecoat over her nightgown.) It's someone at the door, Rudi. (She raps at the bathroom door.) Rudi? (No answer. She goes to the front door.) Who is it? (NETTY answers the door. It is the MAN.)

NETTY. Mister Katzman!...

SIMON/MAN. Is your husband here?

NETTY. Why, uh... I'm not sure, I... I will get him.

SIMON/MAN. Thank you. That would be kind.

NETTY. Ah, yes. Step inside, please. (She hurries upstairs, calling out:) Rudi? Rudi? You have a visitor. (She hears the running water in the bathroom, raps at the door.) It's not the men from the police, from the court, it's... Rudi?

(Still no answer. She pushes the door open, finds RUDI dead. The MAN comes into the bathroom.)

THE MAN. Rudi, I've come for you.

(The MAN touches RUDI's shoulder. RUDI wakes as if from sleep, rises, shedding his housecoat like an old skin. NETTY continues to mourn over his housecoat, once it's fallen on the floor: takes it to her breast like a sleeping child. RUDI bends over, kisses her tenderly on the top of the head. When he stands erect, the MAN embraces RUDI, they leave together. Lights fade to black, NETTY turns off the tap. Silence, then gradually the sound of the pigeons. NETTY and JAKE cleaning out the pigeon room.)

JAKE. He seemed so tired there, toward the end.

NETTY. He hardly slept, toward the end there. And when he did, always the dreams, such terrible dreams.

(They are still a moment, listening to the birds. She resumes cleaning feathers out from the bottom of the coop, notices the trap door.)

NETTY. Jake...

(He comes over beside her as she opens it. They see something. After a moment, JAKE reaches in and takes out the Jewish prayer shawl, which he unwraps to find a loaf of bread and a bottle of wine.)

NETTY. Oh, my!

(JAKE looks closely at the elements.)

NETTY. Pastor, I am sorry, this is terrible!

JAKE. It is nothing, Janette.

NETTY. But Pastor! The body and blood...

JAKE. What with missing the services these last couple weeks, he couldn't stand not to receive the Lord's supper, I think. That is all.

NETTY. But to take them...

(JAKE shrugs.)

NETTY. I wish you didn't have to see, that's all. That this is how he was, at the last.

JAKE. Hmm?

NETTY. Hiding away, so. Always hiding everything. And so confused...

JAKE. This. This shawl. Where did he get it?

NETTY. Who knows?

JAKE. A prayer shawl.

NETTY. I never saw it...

JAKE. May I...?

NETTY. That old thing? You want that, you take it.

(JAKE begins to fold up the shawl. Silence. NETTY looks around at the pigeons. Finally speaks.)

NETTY. Coffee, Pastor?

JAKE. Yes, Netty. That would be fine.

END